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cute, but unlike Lady Macbeth, she is spared the mental breakdown under the weight of crime. At the moment when external circumstances put a hindrance in her path, namely the mere physical difficulty of reaching the Prince, she grasps the relief from action afforded her by the appearance of Odoardo. Woman-like, she is glad to be able to shift the burden of her revenge upon the man, not as a tool but simply surrendering to the masculine in him. She is relieved of the necessity of taking the initiative. She is not fortified in her inner reasons as is Lady Macbeth, who says, "Had he not resembled my father as he slept . . ." She simply shows a reaction after the earlier scenes, the hysteria of which is accentuated to the *crise de nerfs* which has already been mentioned. Her raving, with its agonized wit, recalls the words of the Irish poet, Yeats, "There is no laughter too bitter, no irony too harsh for utterance, no passion too terrible to be set before the minds of men. The Greeks knew that." So did Lessing.

The objection that the scene between Orsina and Odoardo is too witty, too epigrammatic for the access of passion contained therein, is in part answered by the discussion just given. There are, however, external arguments which may be brought to bear on this which show that Lessing was writing out of himself, that his own practice in passion was quite as is Orsina's and that his and other great poets' theories of wit in the drama do not exclude the possibility of just such pointed, clearcut statements as the much criticized remarks of Orsina on "Verstand." Anyone who reads Lessing's letters after the death of his wife cannot fail to be struck by the sharpness, the epigram of expression. Surely, Lessing was here at the moment of his bitterest grief. These letters<sup>1</sup> are among the most heart-rending human documents the world has ever been given. They are the desperate cry of a wounded giant, but they have the same polish as the cries of the love-mad Orsina. With this clear proof out of Lessing's own life it hardly is essential to refer to his theoretical statement

in the *Litteraturbriefe*,<sup>2</sup> where he argues for wit in tragedy, provided only that the wit is natural to the person and to the situation: that this fits Orsina has been shown. And that Lessing is not alone in his feeling for the propriety of wit under such circumstances is proved by the remark of Novalis: "Den stärksten Witz hat die Leidenschaft."<sup>3</sup>

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#### A DISPUTED LINE IN *WILLIAM TELL*

In the first scene of the fourth act where Ruodi and Jenni are watching Gessler's boat tossing on the stormy lake, the devout Jenni begins to pray, whereupon the fisherman chides him for praying for the wicked governor. The boy replies: (lines 2181 ff.)

Ich bete für den Landvogt nicht—Ich bete  
Für den Tell, der auf dem Schiff sich mit befindet.

FISCHER.

O Unvernunft des blinden Elements!  
Musst du, um einen Schuldigen zu treffen,  
Das Schiff mitsamt den Steuermann verderben?

The point in dispute is, what is meant by "Steuermann" in the last line of the passage cited.

In Professor B. J. Vos' edition of the play (Ginn & Co., 1911) there is the following note on this line. "Steuermann: not Tell, who could hardly be called der Steuermann, but in a general sense; to punish one guilty head 'ship and crew have to perish.'"

<sup>2</sup> *L.-M.*, Vol. VIII, p. 219, l. 3.

<sup>3</sup> *Blütenstaub* 40. Minor, Vol. 2, p. 119. Cf. *Blütenstaub* 69 (page 126): "Im höchsten Schmerz tritt zuweilen eine Paralyse der Empfindsamkeit ein. Die Seele zersetzt sich. Daher der tödtliche Frost, die freie Denkkraft, der schmetternde unaufhörliche Witz dieser Art von Verzweiflung. Keine Neigung ist mehr vorhanden; der Mensch steht wie eine verderbliche Macht allein. Unverbunden mit der übrigen Welt verzehrt er sich allmählich selbst und ist seinem Prinzip nach Misanthrop Misotheos."

<sup>1</sup> *L.-M.*, Vol. XVIII, pp. 259 ff.

Professor W. H. Carruth gives this note for the same line in his edition of "Tell" (Macmillan, (1898): "... dem Steuermann, certainly meaning Tell; but does the boatman anticipate ll. 2247 ff.?"

Professor R. W. Deering's edition (Heath & Co., 1894) contains this comment on the line: "... The Steuermann is Tell, whom Ruodi had already seen handle a boat (cf. 151 ff., see also 2196 f.)."

When thought of only in connection with "Unvernunft des blinden Elements" a general statement seems quite natural at this point. But there is more to the context. Whatever may be the reference in "Steuermann," Ruodi, when he utters the words "einen schuldigen" is surely thinking of Gessler, over whose seemingly certain destruction he has just been gloating in lines 2172 f.; so at least a part of the statement has a personal and not a general reference, altho stated in general terms.

May not "Steuermann" have in Ruodi's mind quite as personal a reference as "einen Schuldigen," and so refer to Tell? Ruodi has the very best of reasons for thinking of Tell as a "Steuermann," because, as Professor Deering's cross-reference to lines 151 ff. shows, Tell had taken Ruodi's boat a little more than three weeks before the present scene and carried Baumgarten across the *stormy* lake to safety, a risk which Ruodi had refused to take. Naturally Tell's success in that crisis must have made a deep and lasting impression on Ruodi's mind, and when Jenni says:

Ich bete

Für den Tell, der auf dem Schiff sich mit befindet,

he awakens in Ruodi's mind the vivid memory-picture of Tell in a boat on a stormy lake, acting as "Steuermann." It seems to me psychologically sound to conclude that the sudden mention of Tell as being in the storm-tossed boat which they have just seen, should bring to Ruodi's lips the word "Steuermann" with a distinctly personal meaning.

The query as to whether the line in question may not anticipate Tell's narrative of how he was unchained and took charge of the helm

(2247 ff.), can be answered both affirmatively and negatively: that Ruodi does not have in mind a picture of Tell handling Gessler's boat, but is thinking of him as the man who took Baumgarten across during a storm: affirmatively, that Schiller makes clever and accurate use of the psychology of Ruodi's mind; and by having him call Tell the "Steuermann," and again by the remark in ll. 2195-96,

—Sie haben einen guten Steuermann  
Am Bord: könnt' einer retten, wär's der Tell,

the dramatist prepares us for Tell's own narrative of how his skill as a helmsman delivered him from Gessler's power.

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*Lições de Philologia Portuguesa dadas na Bibliotheca Nacional de Lisboa* pelo D<sup>re</sup> J. LEITE DE VASCONCELLOS, Primeiro Conservador da mesma Bibliotheca, Professor do Curso de Bibliothecario-Archivista. . . Lisboa, Livraria classica editora de A. M. Teixeira & C.<sup>va</sup> 1911. xxiii + 519 pp.

According to the *Prologo*, p. ix, this volume contains the materials of the first six scholastic years of the course of free lectures on Portuguese Philology organized by Dr. Leite in 1903, at the request of some of his students in the *Curso de Bibliothecario-Archivista*.

Since the character of these lectures depended, as we are told, upon the make-up of his audience, composed of regular students and more or less also of teachers and writers, Dr. Leite felt at liberty to give them such scope as seemed best to him "com tanto que não ultrapassasse as fronteiras da sciencia." (Cf. below the comment on p. 19, note 9.) Each lecture consisted of two parts, the first being devoted to the interpretation of old texts published in the author's *Textos Archaicos* (1st ed., 1905; 2d, 1907-1908); the second to various matters, such as replies to queries and notices of new books.

In order to avoid the repetitions and interrup-